

that those veterans selected for Federal employment under the access provisions of that act would have the very same rights as their coworkers and compete for other jobs. Both Republicans and Democrats support this legislation, as does the administration. We have worked very closely with the Federal Reserve Board, the Office of Personnel Management, the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, and others in crafting the language before the House of Representatives this morning.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 807, as amended, is a good piece of legislation, a bipartisan piece of legislation, and a fair bill. It is important to our Federal employees at the Federal Reserve Board, it is also important to those who have served our Nation. I urge all Members to vote for H.R. 807, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 807, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read:

"A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide portability of service credit for persons who leave employment with the Federal Reserve Board to take positions with other Government agencies, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING JOE DIMAGGIO

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 105) recognizing and honoring Joe DiMaggio.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 105

Whereas Joseph Paul ("Joe") DiMaggio was born in Martinez, California, on November 25, 1914;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio was the son of Sicilian immigrants, Joseph Paul and Rosalia DiMaggio, and was the 2nd of 3 brothers to play Major League Baseball;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio played 13 seasons in the major leagues, all for the New York Yankees;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio, who wore Number 5 in Yankee pinstripes, became a baseball icon in the 1941 season by hitting safely in 56 consecutive games, a major league record that has stood for more than 5 decades and has never been seriously challenged;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio compiled a .325 batting average during his storied career and played on 9 World Series championship teams;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio was selected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1955, 4 years after his retirement, in his 1st year of eligibility;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio in 1969 was voted Major League Baseball's greatest living player;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio served the Nation in World War II as a member of the Army Air Corps;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio was tireless in helping others and was devoted to the "Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital" in Hollywood, Florida;

Whereas Joe DiMaggio will be remembered as a role model for generations of young people; and

Whereas Joe DiMaggio transcended baseball and will remain a symbol for the ages of talent, commitment, and achievement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes and honors Joe DiMaggio—

(1) for his storied baseball career;

(2) for his many contributions to the Nation throughout his lifetime; and

(3) for transcending baseball and becoming a symbol for the ages of talent, commitment, and achievement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 105, recognizing and honoring Joe DiMaggio.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, Joseph Paul DiMaggio was a man of grace, class and of dignity. He was a modern day American icon, hero and a gentleman.

Joe DiMaggio was born in Martinez, California, on November 25, 1914, the son of Sicilian immigrants and one of nine children. At the age of 18 he joined the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League and began his career in baseball that would make him one of the most popular men to ever play at America's favorite pastime.

In 1936, Joe DiMaggio became a "Yankee" and remained so for the rest of his life. During his 13 seasons he played in 10 world series and 11 All-Star games. He was the American League's most valuable player for three seasons. In 1941 he set the untouchable record for the longest hitting streak with 56 consecutive games, and in 1955 major league baseball set Joe DiMaggio's name in stone by inducting him into baseball's Hall of Fame. To some he was "Joltin' Joe", to others he was the "Yankee Clipper", but to baseball he remained a legend.

Moreover, Joe DiMaggio's life goes far beyond his on-field extensive achievements. He was a patriot and an ambassador of humanity. In 1943, he volunteered to serve his Nation in

World War II. In 1986, he was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. He founded the Joe DiMaggio's Children Hospital Foundation to provide the highest quality health care for our Nation's most precious possessions. Joe DiMaggio's dedication is an example of class and dignity to every American.

In conclusion, I am proud to take this time on the floor today to remember Joe DiMaggio. The image of number 5, running gracefully through centerfield in Yankee Stadium making another deceptively easy catch, is a symbol to America, one that we will never forget. We thank "Gentleman Joe" for being an inspiration to our Nation.

Accordingly, I urge all Members to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my thanks and the appreciation of the Congress to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), both of whom hail from the other city with a great baseball team, for introducing H. Res. 105 honoring Joe DiMaggio.

Baseball Commissioner, Bud Selig, in commenting on the death of Joe DiMaggio, stated, and I quote: "For several generations of baseball fans, Joe was the personification of grace, class and dignity on the baseball diamond. His persona extended beyond the playing field and touched all of our hearts. In many respects, as an immigrant's son, he represented the hopes and ideals of our great country."

This high praise for a man born in a small fishing village 25 miles from northeast of San Francisco is indeed a wonderful tribute. But it was Emerson who said it best when he said, "It is better to judge a man not by his station in life but what he has done to get there." And so the story of Joe DiMaggio is one that, by anybody's measuring stick, would have to be termed a great life.

Joe DiMaggio's father expected him to become a fisherman, like his brothers, but Joe had different dreams. He dreamt of fields and diamonds. He dreamt of playing the game of baseball.

In 1932, at the age of 17, he began his professional baseball career, playing in three games for the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific coast. He played his first major league game on May 3 of 1936 at Yankee Stadium against the St. Louis Browns.

Joe DiMaggio served the Yankees as one of the best outfielders to play the game. Nicknamed the "Yankee Clipper", for his superb fielding ability, DiMaggio was a great offensive player as well. He set a major league record by establishing a 56 game hitting streak in 1941. And as one who loves the game of baseball, I can tell my colleagues that is a great, great feat.

DiMaggio played in 10 World Series, and was the American League's most valuable player in 1939, 1941 and 1947. In

1948, he led the league with 39 home runs and 155 runs batted in. He ended his phenomenal baseball career with 361 runs in 1,736 games. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1955.

In 1986, DiMaggio received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor for both his achievements on the baseball field as well as for being a worthy role model for past, present and future youth of America. In a recent interview on "60 Minutes", DiMaggio talked about his role as a role model, and he said that he felt blessed that so many people looked up to him and looked to him for strength and for a person who they could follow behind.

For all his glory, Joe DiMaggio was a quiet man, who took pride in who he was and what he did. He had a basic set of values that went untainted by his celebrity status.

DiMaggio's field of dreams took him from a fishing town in San Francisco to the bright lights of New York City and made him, indeed, a baseball great. He gave baseball fans around the world something to cheer about, but more importantly, he gave us all something to believe in, and it is simply called the American Dream.

Joe DiMaggio was a true hero and a gentleman, and I am pleased to support this resolution in his honor.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the distinguished cochairman of our New York delegation, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), for having brought this matter to the floor at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG).

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in expressing my strong support for this resolution honoring the accomplishments of the great Joe DiMaggio.

Like millions of other young boys of the era, Joe DiMaggio was my hero. I never met him, I never saw him play, and only on occasion did I hear him on the radio. The Yankees won so many world championships that was always possible, it seemed, in the fall of the year.

The Yankee Clipper's grace and skill on the field were inspirational, and they fostered a deeper understanding and love of the game of baseball in everyone, and particularly to those who did get a chance to see him in action.

During his storied career, which was interrupted by his honorable service to our country in World War II, Joe DiMaggio led the Yankees to nine world championships and compiled a lifetime batting average of .325.

These accomplishments aside, he will always be best remembered for the 1941 season in which he established one of the sport's most enduring records by hitting safely in 56 consecutive games. After that record was broken, he immediately continued another streak of 16 games.

Mr. Speaker, Joe DiMaggio was an American icon. His stature, presence and commitment to excellence transcended the baseball diamond and left an indelible impact on the culture of our great Nation.

□ 1215

His accomplishments, along with his style and grace, both on and off the field will never be forgotten.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), one of my mentors and just one of our greatest Congressmen and an admirer of Joe DiMaggio.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, let me commend the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), the ranking member; the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH), the chairman; the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN); and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) for moving so swiftly in bringing this bipartisan measure to the floor. And as one who chairs our great New York delegation, which is probably the most bipartisan delegation we have in this House, let me thank my long and dear friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for assisting in bringing our members together to pay tribute to a hero that far too often we thought just belonged to us.

Joe DiMaggio and the New York Yankees are like treasures that you take for granted. And when word came of his ill health, there was no member of the delegation or hardly anybody that was known from New York that did not receive sympathy cards and get well cards as though we just lived around the corner from Joe.

As many times as I have had the pleasure of going to Yankee Stadium and hearing the roar of the crowd both for an active playing Joe DiMaggio or for retired gentleman hero Joe DiMaggio, the class that he brought not just to the Yankees, not just to New York, but to America is something that we have to see and we have to feel.

I was so amazed and indeed surprised to hear from so many Italian Americans to talk about what Joe meant to them. And it was so pleasant to see that, with all of the discrimination and anti-Italian feelings that we have had in this country in the years gone by, that Italian Americans felt that Joe just shattered the image of the Mafia, shattered the image of how Italians were portrayed in our motion pictures and television. And I said, my God, don't you understand, Frank Guarini, who is a former member of Congress and who heads up the National Italian American Foundation, that you may think of Joe as just being a famous and an outstanding Italian American but the people in Harlem and in Bed-Stuy and in the South Bronx were all weeping when we lost Joe DiMaggio.

Sure, he was a classic example of how anybody, no matter what their background, could achieve the high levels of

respect and admiration and love. But he also was one that transcended being an Italian American or Jewish American or black American because he played the game and allowed everyone to believe that if they played it fairly and carried themselves in a decent way that this country would respect them.

Let us, I say to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), say to Joe that he fought for all of us, not Italian Americans. Let us say, the best way to pay tribute to Joe is to try to live our lives the way he lived his. Let us look at all Americans as though, no matter where they came from, give them an opportunity to achieve and they, like our great Joe DiMaggio, can excel.

I believe that one thing that stands out in the greatness of this man is that he never took failure as being an option for him. He starred and yet he acted as though he was just a bat boy when we were in his presence. Few Americans, few people can carry the heavy toll of being so well-known. He did it. He did it well. He sets an example for America and indeed an example for this Congress.

Let me thank all of my colleagues that made it possible for us to bring this to the floor. We brought it to the floor thinking we were honoring a fellow New Yorker and New York Yankee. We know better. We are honoring a great American and a great member of this great world that we live in.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York, our co-chairman of our New York delegation, for again bringing this measure to the floor and giving us the opportunity to recognize this hero of American baseball, a hero of many other endeavors, Joe DiMaggio.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW).

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time.

I would like to associate my remarks with both of the gentlemen from New York. Joe DiMaggio was a constituent of mine living in Hollywood, Florida. And when the Hall of Famer Joe DiMaggio died last week, baseball fans of course lost a great hero. However, the children of south Florida lost more than a hero. They lost an advocate.

While humbly turning away the attention of adults, Joe DiMaggio always had time for children. During his years of retirement in south Florida, the baseball great was particularly concerned with helping alleviating the pain and loneliness of sick children. As a result of his concern and compassion, the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital was dedicated in Hollywood, Florida in 1992.

Although he ordinarily shied away from celebrity events and public attention, Joe DiMaggio faithfully made exceptions for the children at the hospital. Without fail, Joe DiMaggio lent his name and his efforts to fund-raising events and publicity for the hospital, including the annual celebrity baseball game fund-raiser. His aim was to improve the quality and accessibility of

medical services for children of all economic classes. Because of this, no child is turned away from the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital due to lack of financial resources.

But the most special gift Joe DiMaggio gave to the Children's Hospital was his personal time. Each month, without fanfare, Joe DiMaggio would roam the halls of the ward which bears his name visiting with sick children and their families, posing for pictures, telling stories, signing autographs, and giving an encouraging word or just a gentle smile. Knowing of his great regard for personal privacy, I see that these acts were a great sacrifice for DiMaggio which he made for the suffering kids.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to Joe DiMaggio for his contributions to Broward and Dade Counties. Like the rest of the Nation, I am saddened by the loss of this hero of children. While his Hall of Fame records may be broken, Joe DiMaggio's healing touch in the halls of the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital will live on forever.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

One author said, Mr. Speaker, that when people who are important to us die, when people who have had an impact on our lives pass on, a small part of us dies with him. And there is no question, as I listen to my colleagues today and I listen to the sponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and others, that I realize that we were blessed, truly blessed, to have our lives eclipsed by Joe DiMaggio's and to be touched by his life.

I can remember as a small boy hearing about DiMaggio and growing up in a neighborhood where we did not play on grass but we played on glass, as I often say, but the fact is, when we saw heroes and heard about heroes like Jackie Robinson and Joe DiMaggio and others, it made us realize that we could accomplish things too. And as I listen to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), he is absolutely right, Joe DiMaggio was not only a hero for New Yorkers but he was a hero for youngsters in Baltimore and New Orleans and the West Coast, all over our country, and not just this country, Mr. Speaker, but also the world.

Paul Simon, in one of his songs "Mrs. Robinson" stated these words. He said, "Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you." Well, I think it can be safely said that Joe DiMaggio's spirit, his humility, and his grace lives in all of us who have been touched by his life.

One author said that when one goes through the difficult times of life and they are unseen, unnoticed, unappreciated, and unapplauded, it is those moments that bring about a certain obscurity but those who work hard in obscurity that are best able to address the fame and the glory of greatness.

And I think that, as we have listened and shared our thoughts here today, it is clear that God created a wonderful, wonderful road for Joe DiMaggio to walk but at the same time gave him the humility, the strength, and the power to walk it.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would just simply ask all of our colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased that another one of my mentors, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), who originally hailed from Baltimore but decided to move to San Francisco, is here. And she, too, is a tremendous baseball fan and an admirer of Joe DiMaggio.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding and for his kind comments.

Yes, I am from Baltimore. And it was in the 1940s I remember as a little, little girl when Joe DiMaggio came to Baltimore in the 1940s to have, I think it was, a heel operation at Johns Hopkins University. My much older brother, Thomas D'Alesandro—just kidding—interviewed him for the Loyola College newspaper at that time, the Greyhound, and that was the thrill of all time for all of us. Because Joe DiMaggio was, of course, the great star.

I was teasing our colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), about the fact that he beat San Franciscans to the punch, and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), they beat us to the punch with this resolution. Because while he was a Yankee, the Yankee Clipper, and while he always thought of himself in those terms, he was a San Franciscan and we claim him with great pride.

His experience was that of many Italian immigrant families. He was raised partially in North Beach and then his family moved. He built a home when he was making \$100,000 a year for his parents in the Marina district, which is a trip of not many blocks but a great distance for many Italian Americans at the time, in fact, a trip that the Pelosi family made from North Beach to the Marina as well.

So, as a San Franciscan, I rise to convey the sadness of my constituents on the passing of Joe DiMaggio. We thought he would live forever, certainly his fame, his celebrity and his great dignity will, but also to express the pride of the Italian American community in his success.

Many fans and sports writers consider Joe DiMaggio the best all-around player of all time. But that is not the only reason why this son of Italian immigrants who grew up in San Francisco's fishing community could to this day force millions around the world to pause at the mere mention of his name.

Yes, it is the 56-game hitting streak and the speed on the base paths and the quick dash to the center field that made Joe DiMaggio a great American hero. It is also because, through all of his success, through all of his acclamation and praise, Joe DiMaggio was a modest man devoted to family, friends, and fans. He was a hero we could look up to without reservation or hesitation.

Mr. Speaker, it might interest my colleagues to know that during the earthquake of 1989, the Marina district, where Joe DiMaggio's home was, was severely devastated by the earthquake. And as a congressional office, of course we had to help or constituents. But the sight that was so impressive to so many of us was Joe DiMaggio standing in line like just any other person from the Marina to get assistance from FEMA, not assistance but the direction where do we go from here on that. So through it all, he was, as I say, a modest man. He died as he had lived, quietly surrounded by friends and carrying the great dignity for which he will always be remembered.

As a San Franciscan, as an Italian American, as an American, I thank my colleagues for this resolution and remembering the Yankee Clipper, San Franciscan, Joe DiMaggio.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Joe DiMaggio, Baseball Hall of Famer and American icon, who passed away the morning of March 8.

Joe DiMaggio was the personification of grace, class and dignity on the baseball diamond. He was the centerpiece of baseball's most storied franchise, leading the New York Yankees to nine World Series titles in his 12 seasons. He was named to the all-star team every season he played, won three American League most valuable player awards, was a lifetime .325 hitter and his 56 game hitting streak in 1941 still stands as one of the most impressive and untouchable records in all of sports.

Mr. Speaker, Joe DiMaggio performed with an elegance and grace that commanded the respect of both his fans and fellow players. His persona on the field also made him one of the most recognizable and beloved figures off it. Although his demeanor was reserved almost to the point of being aloof, in his case lack of emotion could not be confused with lack of intensity. Nobody played harder than Joltin' Joe, even if a score was lopsided or a pennant already clinched. When asked why he played with such fire, DiMaggio replied simply, "Because there might be someone out there who has never seen me play before."

It was this tireless work ethic and professionalism that set Joseph Paul DiMaggio apart from his peers. In modern day sports, too often players are criticized for selfishness, lack of intensity or being overly concerned with money. Mr. Speaker, none of these qualities were ever attributed to the Yankee Clipper, a great ballplayer, a great man, a great American. Thanks for the memories, Joe. You will be sorely missed, in New York and beyond.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, according to biographer Richard Ben Cramer, Joe DiMaggio was upset to be placed prematurely in past tense by Paul Simon in his

song from "The Graduate". "Joltin' Joe has left and gone away," sang Simon. "What're they talking about?" shot back the Yankee Clipper, "I haven't gone anywhere."

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an American hero. Joe DiMaggio was the first of his kind, a sports legend of the stature only 20th Century America could nurture. He was also one of the last of his breed, a celebrity of shy, quiet dignity.

The son of a fisherman and high school drop out, Joltin' Joe learned the game that would make him famous hitting with a broken oar. He played semipro ball beginning at the age of 18, but by the age of 21, he had debuted with much panache in the majors. The New York Yankees scored perhaps their best hit as a team when they recruited Joe DiMaggio to play center field in 1936.

There was no one like him in the game. What other players had to work at, DiMaggio did with an innate ability that often surprised even the greats. In a professional career lasting only 13 seasons, he won three MVPs, and led the Yankees to ten pennants and nine World Series championships.

After his retirement in 1951, DiMaggio continued to make Americans' lives a little sweeter. His devotion to children, possibly strengthened by his estrangement from his own son, was evident in his commitment to the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital Foundation and the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida. Through his service, children and their families in South Florida could finally receive the specialized medical services they require.

Joltin' Joe passed away on March 8, 1999, and Paul Simon's words still ring true, "A nation turns its lonely eyes to you," not because we lack for great players in the many professional sports that pass our time today, but because in this commercialized age, we lack for heroes—the kind that legends are made of and the kind who, no matter what, maintain their public dignity. Joe DiMaggio did it, and there will never be another like him.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this Resolution honoring Joe DiMaggio.

Joe DiMaggio was more than just a terrific ballplayer—he was special to Americans across our country because of his professionalism, his work ethic, and his remarkable grace.

We honor Joe DiMaggio for that, and we honor him as well for the particular importance he had for millions of Italian-Americans. It's easy to forget today how ingrained prejudices were sixty years ago. In 1939, *Life* magazine printed what it believed was a favorable profile of Joe DiMaggio. In the article, however, it noted that "Instead of olive oil or smelly bear grease, DiMaggio keeps his hair slick with water. He never reeks of garlic and prefers chicken chow mein to spaghetti."

For a generation of Italian-Americans facing daily bigotry, Joe DiMaggio was a hero whose quiet dignity and excellence shattered stereotypes and eloquently rebutted ignorance.

Casey Stengel once modestly and astutely said that "I know I'm a better manager when Joe DiMaggio's in center field." Mr. Speaker, I would only add to that that we have been a better country because Joe DiMaggio was an American.

□ 1230

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to unanimously support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 105.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO DECLARATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 24) expressing congressional opposition to the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state and urging the President to assert clearly United States opposition to such a unilateral declaration of statehood.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 24

Whereas at the heart of the Oslo peace process lies the basic, irrevocable commitment made by Palestinian Chairman Yasir Arafat that, in his words, "all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations";

Whereas resolving the political status of the territory controlled by the Palestinian Authority while ensuring Israel's security is one of the central issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

Whereas a declaration of statehood by the Palestinians outside the framework of negotiations would, therefore, constitute a most fundamental violation of the Oslo process;

Whereas Yasir Arafat and other Palestinian leaders have repeatedly threatened to declare unilaterally the establishment of a Palestinian state;

Whereas the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state would introduce a dramatically destabilizing element into the Middle East, risking Israeli countermeasures, a quick descent into violence, and an end to the entire peace process; and

Whereas, in light of continuing statements by Palestinian leaders, United States opposition to any unilateral Palestinian declaration of statehood should be made clear and unambiguous: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the final political status of the territory controlled by the Palestinian Authority can only be determined through negotiations and agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority;

(2) any attempt to establish Palestinian statehood outside the negotiating process will invoke the strongest congressional opposition; and

(3) the President should unequivocally assert United States opposition to the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state, making clear that such a declaration would be a grievous violation of the Oslo accords and that a declared state would not be recognized by the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDESON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H. Con. Res. 24. It is a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress against a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state and urging our President to assert clearly our Nation's opposition to such a unilateral declaration of statehood.

Mr. Speaker, over 280 Members of the House have cosponsored this measure, introduced by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SALMON), our colleague on the Committee on International Relations. I am pleased to cosponsor this measure with the gentleman from Arizona, and I thank him for his support of this critical issue.

Of concern to many of us, Mr. Speaker, since the signing of the Oslo Accords back in September of 1993 has been PLO Chairman Arafat's ongoing claim to unilaterally declare an independent Palestinian state on May 4, 1999. Despite recent contentions that he will not do so, regrettably Chairman Arafat has not yet categorically and publicly reversed that position.

Support has been growing in both the House and Senate for this resolution, a resolution opposing a unilateral declaration of independence. The Senate sent a clear message just last week when its measure was adopted by a significant vote of 98-1.

H. Con. Res. 24 expresses the opposition of the House to a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state, simply because every issue in dispute between the Israelis and Palestinians must be negotiated in order to be resolved. A unilateral declaration of statehood by Chairman Arafat automatically falls outside the Oslo negotiating framework and would, therefore, constitute a fundamental and an extremely serious violation of the Oslo Accords.

H. Con. Res. 24 goes on to note that President Clinton should make clear that our Nation is opposed to such a declaration and that if such a declaration were to be made, our Nation would consider it a gross violation of the agreements already signed between the PLO and Israel and, moreover, would not be recognized by our Nation.

Chairman Arafat is expected to meet this coming week with President Clinton in Washington. Therefore, the consideration of H. Con. Res. 24 by the